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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: NATO, MCAP, MARR, FR  
SUBJECT: DISCUSSION IN ALLIED CAPITALS ON IMPROVED  
USE OF DEFENSE RESOURCES - PARIS VIEWS

REF: STATE 24062

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: THERE IS A POSITIVE STORY TO TELL ABOUT FRANCE'S GROWING DEFENSE BUDGET, ITS PRO-DEFENSE SECURITY POLICY, AND THE INCREASE IN ITS DE FACTO DEFENSE COOPERATION WITH NATO ALLIES. WE LIST A VARIETY OF WAYS IN WHICH THE USG CAN ENCOURAGE THE FRENCH TO DO MORE AND BETTER (PARA 8). THE CONCEPT OF BURDENSARING IS NOT POLITICALLY BLESSED IN FRENCH DEFENSE POLICY. A BURDENSARING MISSION MAY NOT BE THE BEST FRAMEWORK TO ENCOURAGE THE FRENCH TO INCREASE DEFENSE COOPERATION (ALREADY ADDRESSED IN SEVERAL CHANNELS OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP.) A VISIT MIGHT IN FACT BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. FRANCE'S RELATIONSHIP TO NATO IS A POLITICALLY SENSITIVE SUBJECT. WE HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A MISSION AS WE LEAD UP TO FRENCH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS THIS SPRING, AND SUGGEST REEVALUATING THE SUBJECT AFTER THEY OCCUR. END SUMMARY.

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A POSITIVE STORY, BUCKING THE TRENDS  
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3. THE STORY OF GROWING FRENCH DEFENSE EFFORTS AND DEFENSE-MINDEDNESS CAN MAKE A VERY GOOD IMPRESSION ON CONGRESS, PARTICULARLY IN FACE OF LESS ENCOURAGING TRENDS ELSEWHERE IN THE ALLIANCE. THE EMBASSY EXPERIENCED THIS AGAIN DURING THE VISIT LESS THAN TWO WEEKS AGO OF CODEL BYRD. SENATORS BYRD, NUNN, WARNER, PELL, BOREN SAID THEY WERE VERY FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY BY FRANCE'S GROWING CONTRIBUTION TO WESTERN DEFENSE.

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4. THE FRENCH REFER TO THEMSELVES AS THE WORLD'S THIRD LEADING MILITARY POWER AND ARE PROUD OF THEIR DEFENSE EFFORT AND CONSENSUS. AT A TIME WHEN THE U.S. AND MANY ALLIED DEFENSE BUDGETS ARE CONTRACTING, THE FRENCH HAVE PASSED A FIVE YEAR MILITARY PROGRAM FRAMEWORK COMMITTED TO 4 PERCENT PER ANNUM REAL GROWTH.

5. GOING BEYOND DETERRENCE AND DEFENSE OF THE HOMELAND, THE GOF EXPRESSES INCREASING COMMITMENT TO HELP DEFEND WESTERN EUROPE. IN THE THIRD WORLD THEY SHOW MORE READINESS THAN MOST ALLIES TO ACT--BASED ON A "GLOBAL" FORCE POSTURE--IN SUPPORT OF SHARED WESTERN INTERESTS. AN ENERGETIC (IF AT TIMES COMPETITIVE AND STRIDENT) FRENCH SECURITY POLICY AIMS AT COMBATTING PERCEIVED SOVIET GOALS: TO LURE THE GERMANS EASTWARD, TO ENCOURAGE NUCLEAR ALLERGY, TO FRACTIONATE WESTERN EUROPE, AND TO SAP WESTERN DEFENSE WILL BY A SIREN CALL OF DISARMAMENT.

6. DESPITE THEIR STATUS OUTSIDE OF THE NATO'S INTEGRATED COMMAND STRUCTURE, THE FRENCH ARE INCREASINGLY DEPLOYED AND ENGAGED IN WAYS WHICH, DE FACTO, SHARE THE DEFENSE BURDEN. SOME EXAMPLES ARE MORE MILITARY EXERCISES WITH THE FRG; POLICY TREND TOWARDS FORWARD DEFENSE OF GERMANY; MILITARY ASSISTANCE/DEPLOYMENT TO HELP CHAD DEFEND ITSELF FROM LIBYA; SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO AFRICA WHICH WE WILL NOT REPLACE; NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS AND COORDINATION IN THE PERSIAN GULF; AND A COMPLEMENTARY MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE CARIBBEAN.

7. THE FRENCH ENGAGE IN A PATTERN OF DE FACTO DEFENSE AND SECURITY COOPERATION; SOME BILATERAL WITH THE U.S. AND OTHER KEY ALLIES, SOME WITH THE ALLIANCE. FOR POLITICAL REASONS THE GOF HAS CHOSEN TO KEEP MUCH OF THIS COOPERATION CONFIDENTIAL. THIS SHROUD OF SECRECY LIMITS THE POLITICAL (AND CONGRESSIONAL) ATTENTION TO SOME POSITIVE ASPECTS OF FRANCE'S DEFENSE ROLE IN THE ALLIANCE. HOWEVER, A FRENCH EVOLUTION AWAY FROM "NATIONAL SANCTUARY" AND TOWARDS THE ALLIANCE--AWACS PURCHASE, ARMS COOPERATION, EXERCISES, FORWARD DEFENSE (THE FAR)--IS INCREASINGLY REPORTED IN THE PRESS AND FAMILIAR TO CONGRESS. ENCOURAGING THIS TREND SHOULD HELP WITH THE BURDENSARING CHALLENGE IN CONGRESS.

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WHAT MORE TO DO  
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8. SUBJECT TO THE TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS DISCUSSED BELOW IN PARAS 9-12, WE THINK THE FRENCH COULD BE ENCOURAGED TO GO FARTHER IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS OF ALLIANCE BURDENSARING:

A. EUROPEAN PIPELINE - THE FRENCH DO NOT TAKE PART IN THE PROGRAM TO IMPROVE THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN PIPELINE SYSTEM (CEPS), EVEN FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY. (TO REMIND, 50 OF CEPS IS IN FRANCE.) THE GOF SHOULD BEGIN PAYING ITS FAIR SHARE FOR THE CEPS INFRASTRUCTURE RESTORATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

B. WE ARE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE FRENCH ABOUT THEIR PARTICIPATION IN NATO C3I. IN VIEW OF ITS IMPORTANCE TO DEFENSE AND DETERRENCE IN EUROPE, WE CAN ENCOURAGE

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THE FRENCH TO GO FARTHER AND FASTER IN THIS SPHERE.

C. EARLY IN THE CHIRAC ADMINISTRATION WE HAD SIGNALS OF INTEREST (FROM MOD GIRAUD) IN RECONSIDERING THE DEPLOYMENT OF ITS MILITARY FORCES WITH THE AIM OF REINFORCING THE DEFENSE OF NORTHAG. THE U.S. SHOULD EXPRESS CONTINUING INTEREST IN EXPLORING THAT ISSUE IN DETAIL.

D. THERE ARE REPORTS FROM THE RECENT FRENCH-BRITISH SUMMIT OF FRENCH WILLINGNESS TO HAVE U.K. TROOPS EXERCISE USE OF FRENCH PORTS AND LOC'S. THIS SHOWS A MORE PUBLIC OPENNESS TO INCREASED DEFENSE COOPERATION WITH NATO PARTNERS. WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE THIS TREND.

E. THE FRENCH ARE PUTTING CONSIDERABLE EFFORT INTO FORMING THE JOINT FRENCH-GERMAN BRIGADE. WE CAN REQUEST BILATERAL, AND PERHAPS EVEN A NATO DISCUSSION OF HOW SUCH EFFORTS CAN BEST CONTRIBUTE TO ALLIANCE DEFENSE.

F. THE FRENCH HAVE GRADUALLY EVOLVED TOWARDS AT LEAST A MARGINAL INVOLVEMENT IN NATO EXERCISES. FOR EXAMPLE, NATO EXERCISES HAVE BEEN WRITTEN INTO THE CURRICULUM OF WAR AND STAFF COLLEGES. THERE ARE INTEROPERABILITY BENEFITS FROM BILATERAL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS THE FRENCH-GERMAN KECKER SPATZ EXERCISE. WE CAN ENCOURAGE MORE ACTIVE FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN NATO EXERCISES LIKE REFORGER, WHERE THEY ARE NOW ENGAGED WITH A MINOR ROLE.

G. THE FRENCH ARGUE STRONGLY IN GENERAL FOR U.S. NUCLEAR PRESENCE IN EUROPE, BUT HAVE FELT CONSTRAINED FROM GETTING MUCH INVOLVED IN THE SPANISH BASES ISSUE INCLUDING THE 401 TFW. IN NEXT STEPS, WE CAN SEEK FRENCH SUPPORT FOR USE OF NATO INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDS TO COVER COSTS OF RELOCATING THE 401ST.

H. MORE BROADLY, THE FRENCH ARE ENGAGED IN BILATERAL TALKS WITH SPAIN AND ITALY ON STRENGTHENING DEFENSE TIES AND THE SOUTHERN FLANK. WE COULD REQUEST CONSULTATIONS TO MAXIMIZE THE IMPACT OF THESE EFFORTS AND THEIR COMPLEMENTARITY TO NATO DEFENSE OBJECTIVES.

I. THE MOD UNDER GIRAUD HAS BEEN MORE OPEN TO SHARING THREAT ASSESSMENTS (E.G., ATM), AND CAN BE ENCOURAGED TO SHARE MORE IN THIS ARENA AND IN REQUIREMENTS FOR WEAPONS SYSTEMS IN THE OUT YEARS. MEETING OF THE MINDS ON THIS SUBJECT WOULD HAVE BENEFITS FOR INTEROPERABILITY AND ARMAMENTS COOPERATION. THE U.S. ARMY HAS BEGUN TO PROVIDE THE FRENCH WITH A VIEW OF OUR OPERATIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN, AND WE SHOULD REQUEST RECIPROCITY.

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POLITICS, CONSTRAINTS, TACTICS  
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9. WE APPRECIATE THE WAY IN WHICH REFTEL TOOK ACCOUNT OF FRANCE'S PARTICULAR STATUS IN THE ALLIANCE. WE AGREE THAT IT WOULD NOT MAKE SENSE TO INCLUDE THE FRENCH IN A BURDENSARING VISIT OUT OF NATO HEADQUARTERS. THE FRENCH CONTINUE TO ADHERE STRICTLY

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TO THE POLICY THAT THEIR DECISION MAKING IS NOT SUBJECT TO ALLIANCE ORGANIZATIONS; BUT A FUNCTION OF GOF ASSESSMENTS. THEY DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE OPQ OR FORCE GOAL EXERCISES. AS STATED IN THE REPORT ON BURDENSARING (87 PARIS 52467), "THE FRENCH FIND THE WHOLE IDEA OF BURDENSARING UNACCEPTABLE INSOFAR AS IT WOULD SEEM TO POSTULATE AN A PRIORI COMMITMENT OF FRANCE TO COORDINATE ITS DEFENSE EFFORTS WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS OF NATO."

10. THERE ARE POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISADVANTAGES IN USING A USG MISSION UNDER THE RUBRIC OF BURDENSARING TO EXPLORE THE KINDS SUBJECTS WE HAVE OUTLINED IN PARA 8 ABOVE:

-- THE GOF IS UNLIKELY TO RESPOND ENTHUSIASTICALLY TO A BURDENSARING VISIT PER SE.

-- SPECIFIC ITEMS OF DEFENSE/SECURITY COOPERATION ARE ALREADY DISCUSSED IN VARIOUS COMPONENTS OF THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP INCLUDING: MIL-MIL; POL-MIL; DOD-MOD; JCS-CEMA.

-- SUCH A VISIT COULD LEAD TO A DIALOGUE ON QUID PRO QUOS, AND/OR FAMILIAR FRENCH THEMES ON "REFORM" OF NATO, WHICH MAY NOT BE WELCOME TO THE U.S. SIDE.

-- THE GOF WILL LOOK AT A BURDENSARING VISIT AS A SIGNIFICANT AND SENSITIVE MATTER OF POLICY. ANY U.S. TEAM SHOULD BE FORMULATED APPROPRIATELY AT THE POLICY LEVEL. HOWEVER, RAISING CONCRETE ISSUES OF DEFENSE COOPERATION WITH FRENCH POLICY-LEVEL OFFICIALS IN AN INTERAGENCY SETTING IS NOT THE MOST PROMISING AVENUE TO ACHIEVE RESULTS.

11. WE ALSO WANT TO FLAG CONSTRAINTS RELATED TO THE FACT THAT FRENCH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OCCUR TWO MONTHS FROM NOW, I.E., APRIL 24/MAY 8. THIS PERIOD IS NOT CONDUCTIVE TO DISCUSSING ISSUES OR CHANGES IN AN AREA OF HIGH POLITICAL SENSITIVITY TO THE FRENCH. DEPENDING ON PRESIDENTIAL RESULTS, IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT THE FRENCH WILL HAVE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS LASTING EFFECTIVELY INTO THE FALL OF 1989.

12. IN SUM, WE LOOK AT THIS AS A VERY IMPORTANT SUBJECT, BUT ARE NOT PERSUADED THAT A BURDENSARING VISIT TO FRANCE IS THE WISEST APPROACH. IT WOULD MAKE MORE SENSE TO REEVALUATE OUR OPTIONS FOR MAXIMIZING FRENCH COOPERATION WITH NATO IN LIGHT OF SPRING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RESULTS AND THE RESULTING CHANGES IN THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT. RODGERS

END OF MESSAGE

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